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HONOLULU, HAWAII

I am Pearl Johnson, speaking for the League of Women Voters of Honolulu.

Bill 16 appropriates \$1.1 billion of Oahu taxpayers' money to start on rail transit this year. The City should not spend any of this money until federal matching funds have actually been committed to in writing. The Mayor appears to be going ahead with the rail project without first getting approved federal and state environmental impact statements and without a federal 'Full Funding Grant Agreement,' and without a Federal Transit Administration 'Letter of No Prejudice'.

Honolulu is not listed in the federal FTA New Starts Program in their Annual Report to Congress for rail transit funding in the years 2008, 2009, and 2010. Our City is not listed in any of these categories, i.e. project development, preliminary engineering, final design, full funding stage. Honolulu would need to get on this list of cities, and stand in line as the other US transit cities, for available federal rail transit funding. The earliest this funding for Honolulu could occur would be in 2011 or 2012.

What is the rush? Why does they Mayor push so hard to get started on rail? He used to say we had to act fast so we would not lose the federal money they were handing out. Now he says we can spend billions of Oahu money with no assurance of federal funds.

By circumventing the legally required EIS process and beginning construction with local funds only and without any assurance of federal funds, Honolulu risks not receiving any federal funds at all. Having spent \$1.1 billion of Oahu tax funds, will we then be committed to spending billions more on a system which will do nothing to alleviate traffic congestion?

MISC. COM. 1195

Bill 16

6/10/2009

COUNCIL